WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A hybrid Media Gateway Control Function (MGCF) in a packet-switched radio telecommunications network that provides access to multimedia services for a mobile terminal operating in a circuit-switched mode, said hybrid MGCF comprising:

a circuit-switched (CS)-specific signaling mechanism that exchanges CS-specific control signaling with a radio access network serving the mobile terminal;

a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) signaling mechanism that exchanges SIP control signaling with the packet-switched radio telecommunications network;

a converter that converts the CS-specific control signaling received by the CS-specific signaling mechanism into SIP control signaling, and sends the SIP signaling to the SIP signaling mechanism; and

a switching control function that controls a Media Gateway (MGW) to route media payload from the radio access network to a destination.

2. The hybrid MGCF of claim 1 wherein the CS-specific signaling mechanism is associated with a Mobile Switching Center (MSC) Server functionality function within the hybrid MGCF that mimics MSC Server functionality.

3. The hybrid MGCF of claim 2 wherein the MSC Server functionality function includes a radio handling part for legacy base stations.

4. The hybrid MGCF of claim 2 wherein the SIP signaling mechanism is associated with a SIP User Agent functionality function within the hybrid MGCF that mimics SIP User Agent functionality.

5. The hybrid MGCF of claim 4 wherein the converter converts radio access network events reported to the hybrid MGCF in CS-specific signaling messages into SIP events in SIP signaling messages.

6. The hybrid MGCF of claim 5 wherein the SIP signaling mechanism exchanges SIP control signaling with a Call State Control Function (CSCF) that accesses multimedia services for the mobile terminal.

7. The hybrid MGCF of claim 6 wherein the SIP User Agent ensures that the SIP control signaling exchanged with the CSCF mimics the control signaling that the CSCF normally receives when accessing services for a mobile terminal operating in the packet-switched mode.

8. The hybrid MGCF of claim 5 wherein the switching control function controls the MGW to route media payload from the radio access network to a multimedia Internet Protocol (IP) network.

9. A third generation (3G) wireless telecommunications network providing access to multimedia services to a mobile terminal operating in a circuit-switched mode, said network comprising:

a radio access network (RAN) that provides the mobile terminal with access to the 3G network;

a Media Gateway (MGW) that receives media payload from the RAN and routes the payload to a destination;

a Call State Control Function (CSCF) that accesses multimedia services for the mobile terminal; and

a hybrid Media Gateway Control Function (MGCF) that comprises:

a circuit-switched (CS)-specific signaling mechanism that exchanges circuit-switched control messages with the RAN;

a converter that converts the circuit-switched control messages received by the CS-specific signaling mechanism into Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) control messages; and

a SIP signaling mechanism that exchanges SIP control signaling with the CSCF.

10. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 9 wherein the hybrid MGCF also includes a Mobile Switching Center (MSC) Server functionality function that mimics MSC Server functionality.

11. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 10 wherein the RAN includes a plurality of legacy base stations, and the MSC Server functionality function includes a radio handling part for the legacy base stations.

12. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 10 wherein the hybrid MGCF also includes a SIP User Agent functionality function that mimics SIP User Agent functionality.

13. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 12 wherein the converter within the hybrid MGCF converts radio access network events reported to the hybrid MGCF in CS-specific signaling messages into SIP events in SIP signaling messages.

14. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 13 wherein the SIP signaling mechanism within the hybrid MGCF exchanges SIP control signaling with a Call State Control Function (CSCF) that accesses multimedia services for the mobile terminal.

15. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 14 wherein the SIP User Agent within the hybrid MGCF ensures that the SIP control signaling exchanged with the CSCF mimics the control signaling that the CSCF normally receives when accessing services for a mobile terminal operating in the packet-switched mode.

16. The 3G wireless telecommunications network of claim 15 wherein the switching control function within the hybrid MGCF controls the MGW to route media payload from the radio access network to a multimedia Internet Protocol (IP) network.